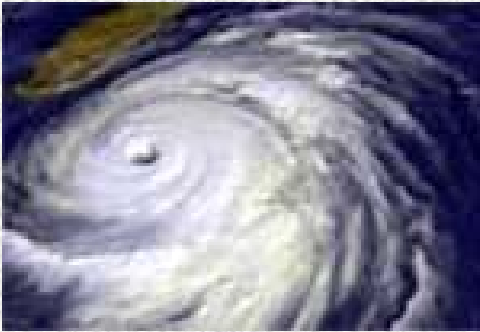


Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities and Senior Citizens



Presented By:

Arva Priola

disAbility Resource Center

Outreach Coordinator for Deaf and Hard of
Hearing

409 Progress Street, Fredericksburg, VA
22401

Email: apriola@cildr.org

Phone: 540 -373-2559



Goals



- Recognize that people with disabilities and seniors have a great stake in the effectiveness of public programs aiming at preparing for and responding to all types of disasters.
- What is a disability and the laws that apply for access?
- That the needs of the above community is adequately addressed prior to the emergency.
- Community to begin to prepare to make informed decisions and know of available resources.
- To include seniors and people with disabilities at all levels of government and private sector to offer insights, knowledge and resourcefulness of your local emergency management planning and CERT teams.

Demographics



- 84 million seniors by 2030
- Majority will experience a disability before they die.
- 54 million people with disabilities
- Nearly 4 million will need assistance in daily life activities such as dressing, bathing, and eating.
- 8 million with limited vision
- 31 million with hearing loss
- 1.5 million wheelchair users
- 7 million with mental retardation
- Countless others with developmental disabilities as well as mental illness.
- Many individuals have more than one disability

2005 Disability Statistics in the United States

- ***Prevalence of disability: The percentage of working age individuals reporting a disability was 12.6 percent.***
- ***Employment: The employment rate of working age people with disabilities was 38.1 percent.***
- ***Full-Time/Full-Year Employment: The percentage of working age people with disabilities working full-time was 22.6 percent.***
- ***Annual Labor Earnings: The median annual labor earnings of working age people with disabilities working full-time/full-year was \$30,000.***
- ***Household Annual Income: The median household annual income of working age people with disabilities was \$35,000.***
- ***Poverty: The poverty rate of working age people with disabilities was 24.6 percent.***
- ***Supplemental Security Income: The percentage of working age people with disabilities receiving SSI payments was 15.4 percent.***

2005 Disability Statistics in the United States

- ***Housing: The percentage of people with disabilities living in owner occupied housing was 62.5 percent.***
- ***Activity Limitation-Employment: The percentage of working age people with sensory, physical and /or mental disabilities that report an employment disability (difficulty working at a job or business) was 53.8 percent.***
- ***Age Distribution: 10.9 percent of working age people with disabilities were ages 21-29.***
- ***Race Distribution: 26.4 percent of working age people with disabilities were non-white.***
- ***Gender Distribution: 51.6 percent of working age people with disabilities were women.***
- ***Education Distribution: 12.8 percent of working age people with disabilities had a Bachelor's degree or more.***

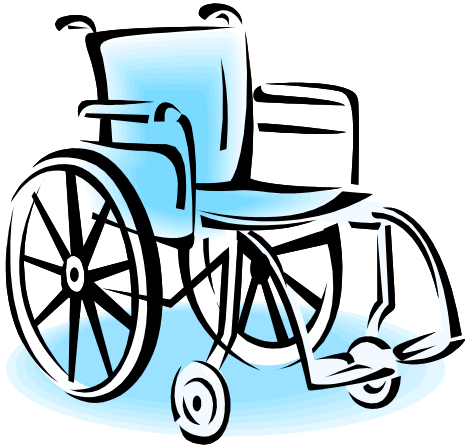


Prepare the Workplace as Well as Residence of People with Disabilities and Senior Citizens



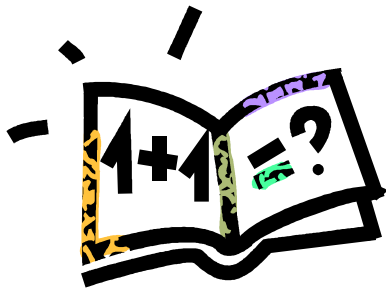
What is a disability?

A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of life's daily activities.



Types of disabilities:

Physical
Emotional
Developmental
Hearing
Visual
Cognitive
Learning



Physical Disabilities

A physical disAbility as defined by the ADA is “any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the body’s systems”.

Examples of Physical Disabilities

Cerebral Palsy

Multiple Sclerosis

Amputee

Paralysis

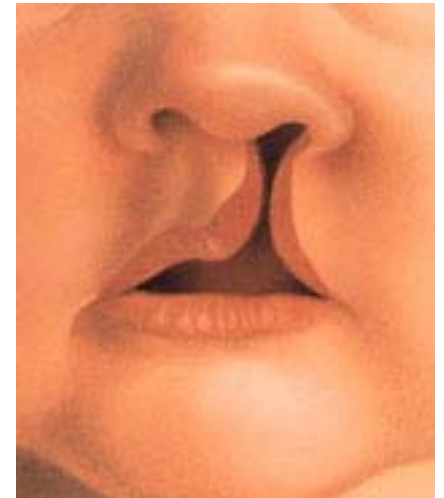
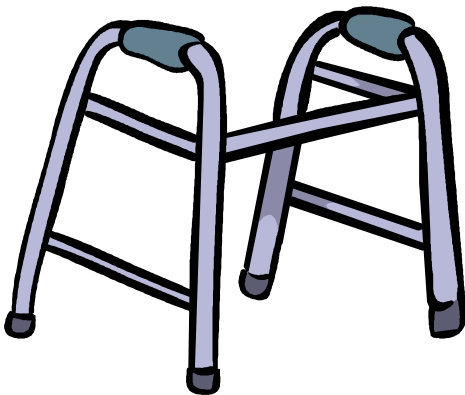
Arthritis

Obesity

Cleft Lip/Palate

Muscular Dystrophy

Heart Disease



If you can't see it, is it still a disability?

NOT ALL DISABILITIES ARE APPARENT!

It is too easy to fall into the trap of jumping to conclusions when we believe that what we see is enough evidence to pass judgment.

Examples of "Hidden Disabilities"

ADHD

Autism

Dyslexia

Mental Illness

Bipolar Disorder

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Hearing Loss and Vision Loss

Even though these disabilities are hidden, they are real!

Autism

- Individuals look "normal" so people can't tell something is wrong.
- They are extremely strong in all areas EXCEPT trunk muscles, watch for positional asphyxiation if first responders have to restrain them.
- Avoid physical "hands on" contact if at all possible due to hyper-sensitivities to light, sound and touch.
- Autism Spectrum disorders, all are different in some way. (<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/autism.cfm>)
- Avoid interviews if possible, speak in slow calming tones, and if you don't get the right answer, re-phrase; they probably know the answer as it relates to their residence location etc. avoid who, what, where questions.
- Encourage parents to put the Autism information in to the computer assisted dispatch system with alerts for Fire/EMS and Police.

Deaf & Hard of Hearing & Deafblind

**Hearing loss is the largest disability &
continues to grow!**

Statistics

There are 615,000 Virginians with hearing loss!

There are 31 million Americans with hearing loss!

60% of people with hearing loss are between the ages of 21-65!



Misconceptions

Excellent Lip Readers

All people with Hearing Loss Know Sign Language

Yelling Makes them Hear Better

Communication can be achieved through Writing

Vision compensates for Hearing Loss.



Visual Impairments

Legally Blind: Visual Acuity of less than 20/200 with correction or a field of less than 20 degrees.

Alternate Definition: Anyone that must devise alternative techniques to do efficiently those things which they would do with sight if they had normal vision.

Examples of Visual Impairments:



Tunnel Vision
Sensitivity to Light
Macular Degeneration
Retinal Detachment
Cataracts

UNFAIR HEARING TEST

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

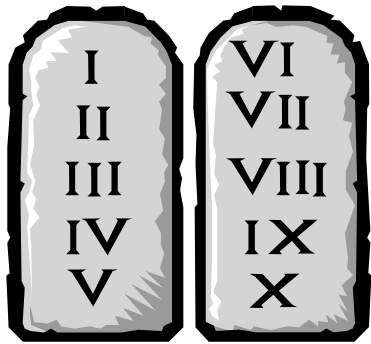
6. _____

7. _____

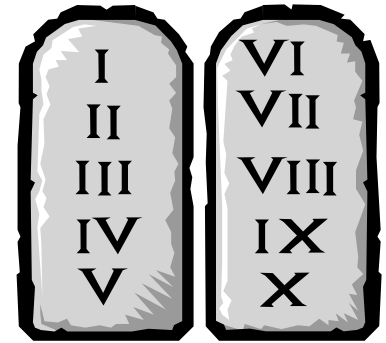
8. _____

9. _____

10. _____



Commandments



- I. **Speak directly to the person, rather than through a companion.**
- II. **Offer to shake hands when introduced.**
- III. **Always Identify yourself & others when meeting people with a visual disability.**
- IV. **If you offer assistance, wait until the offer is accepted.**
- V. **Treat adults as adults.**
- VI. **Do not lean against or hang on someone's wheelchair.**
- VII. **Listen attentively when talking with people who have difficulty speaking, and wait for them to finish.**
- VIII. **Place yourself at eye level when speaking with someone in a wheelchair or on crutches.**
- IX. **Tap a person who has hearing loss on their shoulder or wave to get their attention.**
- X. **Relax.**

Legal Responsibilities

Emergency response organizations are responsible for providing emergency information to all cultures that live in your community.

Laws:

- **The Rehabilitation Act of 1973**
 - **Section 504 Federal Government to require accommodations for people with disabilities.**
 - **Section 508 Equipment used by the federal government be accessible to people with disabilities.**

Laws

- **American with Disabilities Act of 1990**

Title I - Workplace with people with disabilities

Title II - State and local governments

Title III - Private Sector

Title IV – Telecommunication Relay Service

- **Telecommunication Act of 1996**

All products must be accessible for people with disabilities and people involved in the planning process for new products.

- **Federal Communication Commission**

Broadcasters during emergencies must provide visual display such as open captioning, scrolling, or crawls that appear on the screen.

Laws

- **President Bush's Executive Order #13347**

July 26, 2004

- **Emergency Communication**
- **Emergency Preparedness in the Workplace**
- **Emergency Transportation**
- **Health**
- **Private Sector Coordination**
- **Research**
- **State Local and Tribal Government Coordination**
- **Technical Assistance and Outreach**

Immediate Concerns

- **Most serious concern for the elderly and people with disabilities in a disaster situation is the evacuation of those persons who are home bound and do not have access to transportation.**
- **Many are completely dependent on others for care and transportation. In an emergency these persons will not be able to evacuate or ride out the emergency in place without help. It is likely that in the case of low-income elderly, family and/or friends may not be willing or able to help.**
- **First responders should know who these people are in advance so that they will not be forgotten in an emergency**



Immediate Concerns

- Persons who attempt to ride out an emergency at home must have services to insure their well-being until the crisis passes. This could include food, water and power. Family, neighbors and helping agencies may or may not be able to provide such assistance. During the hurricane several years ago we continued to deliver home delivered meals to the home-bound elderly we serve. We also provided transportation to several clients who were without power so they could temporarily live with relatives. (Rappahannock Area Agency on Aging)
- The other big concern is for elderly and people with disabilities in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. These facilities must have disaster plans that include evacuation when necessary. First responders must be aware of the location and numbers of persons in these places.

Communication Is The Key !

Communication is the lifeline of emergency management.



Many people with disabilities and senior citizens are unemployed, socially isolated, or in other ways less connected to society.

Communication with members of the community must be viewed differently depending on the point at which it is initiated.

Communication Is The Key !

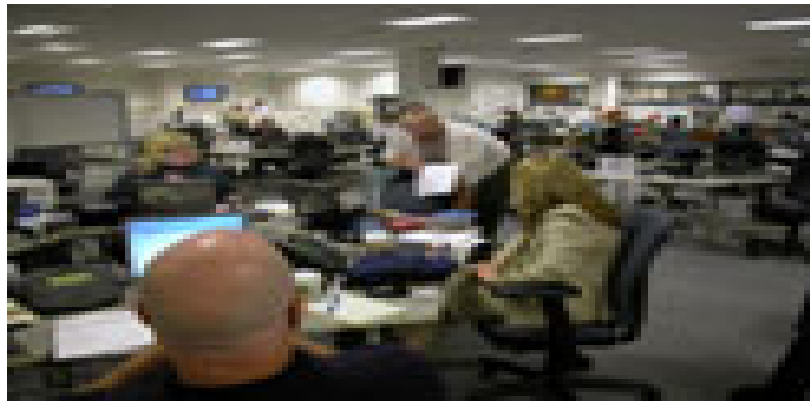
What must be done?



- Planned before the disaster or emergency.
- Prior to an event , as an emergency warning or notification
- During an event such as emergency information and instruction
- Following the event , as recovery information.

Major Needs for Your Community

- **Identify those in community who might have special needs before, during, and after a disaster or emergency. Doing so ahead of time results in improved emergency plan , a better determination of resource needs and more informed actions and decisions.**
- **Educating citizens with specials needs about the realistic expectations of service during, after an emergency. Show a serious commitment.**



Major Needs for Your Community

- **Education of People with Disabilities and Senior Citizens**
 - **Additional Supplies for People with Disabilities:**
 - Prescription medicines, list of medications including dosage, list of allergies.
 - Extra eyeglasses, communication devices, hearing aid and cochlear implant batteries.
 - Extra wheelchair batteries and oxygen.
 - Keep list of style and serial numbers of medical devices.
 - Medical insurance, Medicare and Medicaid cards.
 - List of doctors, relatives or friends who should be notified if you are hurt.

Animal Safety Plan

- Allowing Service Animals in Shelters



Accessible Disaster Facilities and Services

- Communication is vital during a disaster to help access damage, collect information, and deploy supplies.
- Access to appropriate facilities-housing, toilets, and other necessities before, during, and after.
- Architectural accessibility improves the provision of disaster services for people. It is important to make use of universal design concept.

Accessible Communications and Assistance

- People with hearing loss vary in their mode of communication.
- The range of services can range from a sign language interpreter, assistive listening device, captioning, alerting devices and etc.
- Written materials should be provided on audiocassette for the blind or in large print for those with low vision.
- People with Alzheimer's disease, brain injury, autism, developmental disabilities require assistance to cope with the new surroundings and to minimize confusion factors.

Technology Used May Vary

- Television stations must be responsible to all viewers and not run a text message “crawl” across a TV screen in any area reserved for closed captioning as this will make both sets of message unintelligible for people with hearing loss.
- Camera operators and editors need to include the sign language interpreter in the picture if one is interpreting next to official spokesperson presenting emergency information.
- Those setting up hotlines during an event should include voice and TTY numbers and when available. This should be announced by television and radio. It should be captioned.
- Officials should must have instruction on how to make use of the TTY, VA Relay (711) ,Video Relay, and CapTel,



Partnership with the Media

- Format that is accessible for the blind and those with hearing loss.
- Important information that people need:
 - Alerts for the public
 - Informing rescue personnel about people with medical conditions, impairments and accessible shelters.

Partnership with Disability Community

Virginia Association of Deaf-Blind

Virginia Association of the Deaf (Local Clubs)

Hearing Loss Association of America (VA Chapters)

VA Department of Rehabilitative Services

VA Centers for Independent Living

VA Department of Aging

AARP (VA Chapters)

Local Community Service Board

Parent Education Advocacy Training Center

National Institute for Mental Health

Parent Education Advocacy Training Center

National Federation of the Blind (VA Chapters)

National Organization on Disability

Department of Veterans Affairs

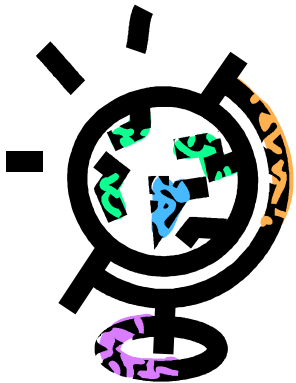
Etc



Centers for Independent Living

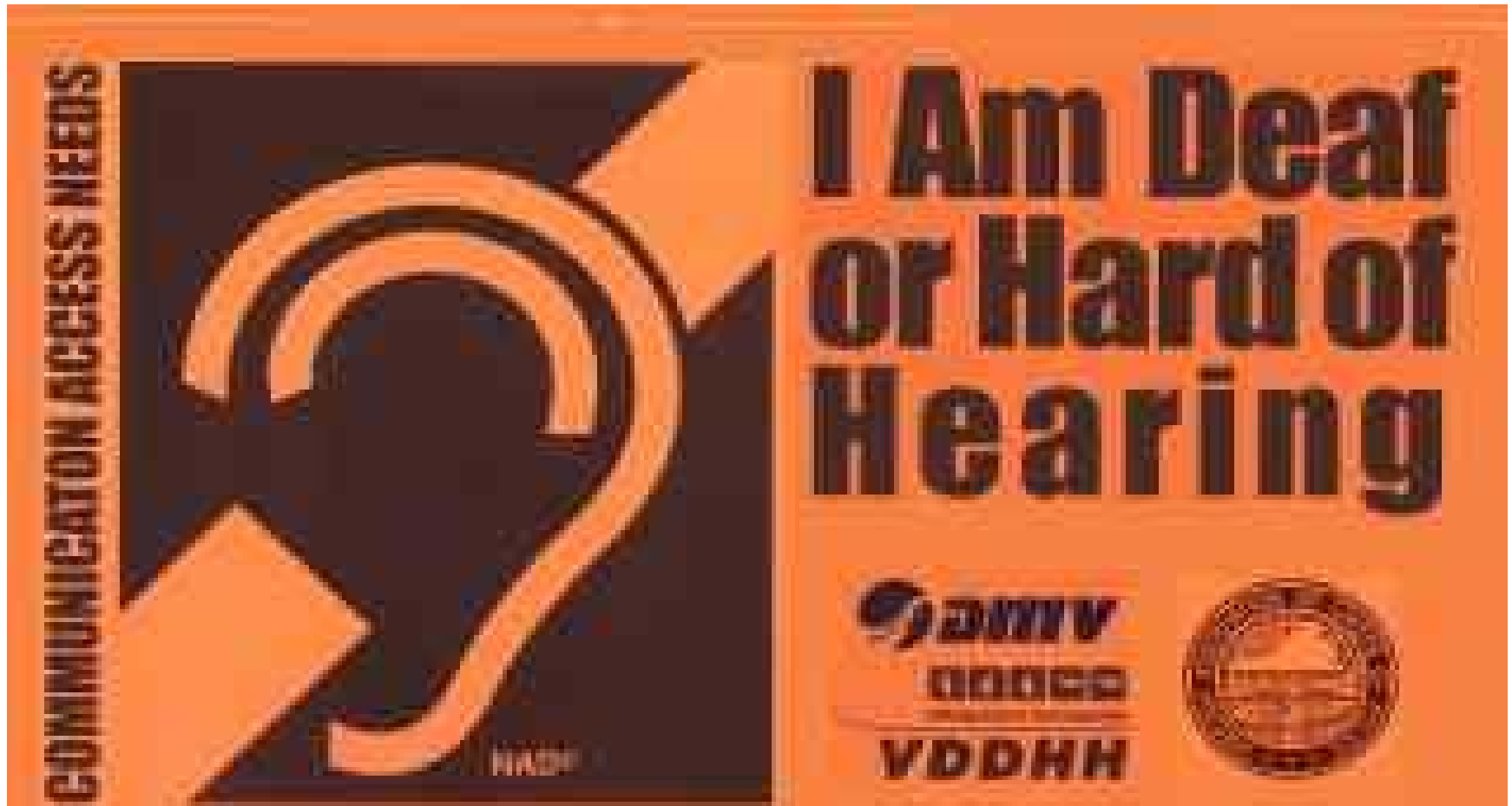
Website: vadr.org/cbs/cilslisting.htm

- Consumer Controlled
- Community Based
- Cross Disability
- Funded by State, Federal, & Local Government, and Private Donations
- Non-Residential
- Operated by Individuals with Disabilities
- 500 Centers in the US/600 Worldwide



Visor Alert

Virginia Department for Deaf and Hard of Hearing
vddhh.org



Website: http://projectlifesaver.org/public_html/



Project Lifesaver

The reliable rapid-response partnership with law enforcement aiding victims and families suffering from alzheimer's disease and related disorders such as Down's Syndrome and Autism.



ENDORSED BY THE NATIONAL SHERIFF'S ASSOCIATION

Resources

- **American Red Cross**
- **Virginia State Homeland Security**
- **Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)**
- **Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing**
- **FEMA**
- **National Organization on Disability**

Thanks to National Organization on Disability

- A lot of the information for this presentation was taken from the below booklet.

Emergency Preparedness Initiative

Special Guide on the Special Needs of
People with Disabilities for Emergency
Managers , Planners, and Responders

Website: [www,nod.org](http://www.nod.org)

Contact Information

Arva B. Priola

The disAbility Resource Center

409 Progress Street

Fredericksburg, Va. 22401

Voice: (540) 373-2559

Voice or Relay: (800) 648-6324

TTY: (540) 373-5890

Fax: (540) 373-8126

Email: apriola@cildrc.org